next autumn captured Harper's Ferry and fought the battle of Antietam; in fact, his force would not have been very far short of that with which Lee, in July, 1863, assaulted Meade's lines in the protracted and obstinately contested battle of Gettysburg. And while we do not for a moment suppose that Johnston's army in 1861 was equal to either of the Confederate armies of Antietarn and Gettysburg in point of efficiency, yet it would, as has just been pointed out, have possessed considerable advantages over any troops which McClellan could have opposed to it as early as October, 1861. These must have been for the most part raw and ill-disciplined, unacquainted with their brigade and division commanders, and necessarily affected unfavorably to a greater or less extent by the fact of the battle of Bull Run having been a bad defeat for the Union forces. We may fairly say therefore, that an invasion of the North, undertaken in October, 1861, held out a very fair promise of a successful result for the Confederate arms.[1]

As to the nature of such a result,—its magnitude, its influence on the temper of the Northern people, its effect on the duration of the war,—it is, of course, impossible to speak. But it is clear that the decision

as to adopting the course advocated by the generals should have been arrived at by contrasting its probable result with that of remaining on the defensive.

This latter course was certain to give to the stronger of the two antagonists the time necessary for augmenting MB army, thoroughly ^q^ippi^g it with

[1] See Smith, C. W. I*., 32, 33.